

Sharing the Good News

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dioceses and parishes
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Pope Francis invites us to celebrate Saint Valentine's Day

In his 2016 apostolic exhortation on *The Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia)*, Pope Francis referred directly to Saint Valentine's Day - "I think of Saint Valentine's Day; in some countries, commercial interests are quicker to see the potential of this celebration that we are in the Church" (AL 208). Inspired by the Holy Father's encouragement of greater use of Saint Valentine's Day in the Church, the World Meeting of Families 2018 has produced a new resource for couples to use this year as part of ongoing preparations for WMOF2018 in August 2018.

The WMOF2018 office has prepared flyers inviting couples to celebrate the Joy of Love this Saint Valentine's Day. The flyers include prayers, some words of encouragement from Pope Francis and some ideas on how to mark St Valentine's Day. A series of special gift tokens that couples can give to each other have also been made available. These include: a technology-free evening; time for prayer together as a couple, go for a walk together; a special dinner at home, loads of hugs; and a journey down memory lane where the couple takes time to remember how they met and have grown together.



The resources are available in each cathedral across Ireland, in Veritas shops and in Accord marriage care centres nationwide. They can also be downloaded from worldmeeting2018.ie. Happy Saint Valentine's Day!

Drugs trade a callous trade in death - Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

Speaking at the 18th service of commemoration and hope of the National Family Support Network, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin said, "The drug trade is a ruthless trade in ruining lives, a callous trade in death. It is a ruthless and cynical and diabolic trade which has no respect for any life. It thrives on destroying the lives of the weakest, whether of those who fall to abuse or those who they trap into becoming agents of their despicable trade." The service took place in the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Sean McDermott Street, Dublin on 1 February. See dublindiocese.ie for more.

Catholic Schools committed to pluralism - Bishop Denis Nulty

Bishop Denis Nulty of Kildare and Leighlin, was chief celebrant at Mass to open Catholic Schools Week on Sunday 29 January, which was broadcast by RTÉ from Saint Peter & Paul's Church Portlaoise, Co Laois. In his homily, Bishop Nulty praised the service of religious sisters and brothers in Catholic education, and he highlighted the fact that Catholic schools are committed to pluralism. Read the full homily on catholicnews.ie.



News Snippets

- The Bishops' Council for Education has welcomed the recent statements of the Minister for Education & Skills, Mr Richard Bruton TD, in relation to the teaching of religion with sacramental preparation in Community National Schools, and concerning the plurality of provision of schools. The Council for Education said it will study these proposals and, in the meantime, will continue to engage with Minister Bruton, his departmental officials and with the Education and Training Boards.
- The National Centre for Liturgy is hosting a new exhibition in Maynooth entitled *Art for Faith*. It will be available for public viewing from 10 - 24 February. For more see www.liturgy-Ireland.ie.
- World Day of the Sick will be celebrated on 11 February, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, on the theme 'Amazement at what God has accomplished: "The Almighty has done great things for me" (Luke 1:49)'. World Day of the Sick is a time to pause and be prayerfully in solidarity with those who are sick and with all who care for the sick. Read Pope Francis' message on catholicbishops.ie.